



In Case of Emergency...

Monthly Newsletter of the Utah Division of Emergency Services and Homeland Security

Volume II, Number 9

September, 2002

TORNADO STRIKES MANTI

On Sunday, September 8, a twister touched down in the southeast area of Manti, damaging nearly 100 homes and knocking power out for seven hours. Fortunately, no one was injured or killed.

DES sent a team of community support and communications specialists to Manti to assist Sanpete Emergency Management Director Kevin Holman with running the county



EOC and other duties. DES staff also participated in damage assessments with a team from the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the Small Business Administration.



Holman did an outstanding job coordinating response and recovery efforts. Community members immediately went to work clearing downed trees from streets and helping neighbors.

"Utah is unique in its ability to recover from this type of disaster. No body asks, the volunteers just show up with chain saws, rakes and wheelbarrows and go to work putting their community back together," said DES director Scott

Behunin. Representatives from FEMA commented on the same thing.

Governor Mike Leavitt also visited the town and pledged support for the victims of the storm.

The city, county and the state all declared a "state of emergency" for Manti. A presidential disaster declaration will not be necessary because the vast majority of damage will be covered by insurance.

UPCOMING EVENTS

September 18 CSEPP Annual Exercise
September 20 SLA Grant applications are due to DES
October 1 City/County Directors Meeting

For more information, contact DES at 801-538-3400 or toll-free at 800-753-2858.

SANTAQUIN AREA HIT BY MUDSLIDES

Approximately 90 families in Spring Lake and Santaquin were evacuated Thursday, September 12 due to a debris flow from Dry Mountain.

In Spring Lake, mud flowed into a canal causing it to overflow and flood several homes. In Santaquin, two mudslides came off the mountain affecting homes in two of the city's northeast subdivisions.

No injuries were reported. At least 20 homes were damaged and one destroyed. A ruptured gas line caused a house fire that was quickly extinguished.

Last summer, a wild fire burned the west slope of Dry Mountain. Officials had been concerned the lack of vegetation could cause flooding and mudslides and had tried reseeding the mountain. Drought conditions kept the seeds from growing.

DES dispatched a team of community support specialists and the interagency technical team to assist city and county emergency officials. Red Cross officials set up emergency shelters to assist displaced families.



The city and county both issued disaster declarations. Governor Leavitt signed an emergency declaration while visiting the scene.

HOMELAND SECURITY CONFERENCE

DES hosted a two-day conference on "Protecting Utah's Critical Facilities" September 12-13 at the Wyndham Hotel in Salt Lake City.

The conference brought together key decision makers from federal, state and local public safety agencies and private industry. Discussion focused on the importance of working together to protect Utah's infrastructures including transportation systems, financial institutions, government facilities, utilities and others.

"It's vital for public and private entities to address the needs of Utah's infrastructure," said Utah Public Safety Commissioner Robert Flowers. "Communication and coordination are the keys to successful Homeland Security planning."

More than 250 people from 30 public and private organizations participated in the conference. Speakers included representatives from the Department of Public Safety, DES, Utah National Guard, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Environmental Protection Agency, National Institute of Justice and various corporations.

SMITH NEW DES DEPUTY DIRECTOR



Stu Smith has been named as DES's new deputy director. He replaces Mike Kuehn who is leaving to attend the FBI national leadership academy in Virginia at the end of the month. Stu has been the commander of the Homeland Security Taskforce and recently finished a stint as the deputy director of the Utah Olympic Public Safety Command. This change brings emergency services and homeland security closer together.

Additional changes include Nancy Barr as the state hazard mitigation officer, replacing Fred May who recently retired. Nancy has worked for DES for 10 years, most recently as a county liaison officer.

Ryan Pietramali has also been brought on board to help with the hazard mitigation plan and the floodplain program.

With the recent reorganization of the division, county liaisons are now known as community support specialists. Nadine Taylor is the newest. Nadine has been the state planner for the Chemical Stockpile Emergency Preparedness Program and will use the skills she used there to help local communities with their plans.

DES PARTICIPATES IN NATIONAL SURVEY

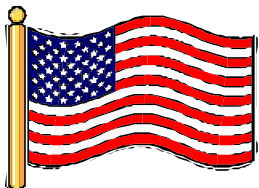
DES was recently recognized for participating in a nationwide survey combating terrorism in August of 2001.

The division was selected to participate in this survey by RAND, an internationally renowned research organization.

James S. Gilmore III, Chairman of the Advisory Panel to Assess Domestic Response to Capabilities for Terrorism Involving Weapons of Mass Destruction stated that, "The information gathered for the survey proved to be an important benchmark in pre-September 11 efforts by the Federal government to improve state and local preparedness for domestic terrorist incidents involving weapons of mass destruction."

This year, DES has been invited to participate in a follow up survey that will be included in the Panel's upcoming report to President George Bush and Congress reflecting post September 11 state and local planning resource needs.

DES EMPLOYEES OBSERVE PATRIOT'S DAY



Proclaimed Patriot's Day by President George W. Bush and Governor Mike Leavitt, the first anniversary September 11 was marked with solemn ceremonies and observances. Several DES employees

attended a ceremony at DPS headquarters. The DPS honor guard offered a 21-gun salute, bag pipers played "Amazing Grace," and words of hope and courage were offered in honor of the victims of 9-11-01.

TOOELE UPGRADES SIREN SYSTEM

Contributed by Wade Mathews of Tooele County Emergency Management

Tooele County Emergency Management (TCEM) is upgrading its outdoor warning system by adding 23 new sirens. The new sirens will be in areas not covered by the current system. By this winter people living in or near Grantsville, Stansbury, Erda, and Pine Canyon should be able to hear potential emergency messages sent through the sirens. Siren coverage will also be increased in Tooele City and Rush Valley.

Kari Sagers, director of TCEM, said, "The coverage of the original siren system, with 37 sirens, only met minimum requirements at the time it was installed in 1994. With the population growth and increased recreational use in the county, we felt it was necessary to expand our emergency notification capabilities throughout the Tooele and Rush Valleys."



The sirens are mounted on top of a 45-foot high pole. They consist of the sound horn, solar panels and radio controls. John Michaelson, one of the technicians leading the siren project, said, "All of the work involved in siren site acquisition has been worth it, knowing that the community will be a safer place."

The cost of upgrading the warning system is approximately \$1.2 million. Sagers said, "Although the notification system is funded through the Chemical Stockpile Emergency Preparedness Program (CSEPP), we are pleased that Tooele County benefits by having an all-hazard warning system for the major population areas."

Repairing and maintaining the siren system can be very costly. To discourage vandalism, there is a penalty of up to five years in prison and a \$5,000 fine. Tooele County also offers a \$1,000 reward for information leading to the conviction of anyone causing damage to the equipment.

The outdoor warning system is programmed with 16 pre-recorded emergency messages. In the event of activation of the system, a message would be played, followed by the "whoop-whoop" tone, then the message repeats again. If someone doesn't understand the message, they should tune to an Emergency Alert System (EAS) radio or TV station for further information. They shouldn't call 911 unless it's a life-threatening emergency. The sirens are tested every Wednesday at 4:00 p.m.

For more information call TCEM at 843-3260.

Editor's note: Want to be a contributor to In Case of Emergency . . . ? Send your stories to paulae@utah.gov

STATE AND LOCAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS

City and County Emergency Managers: In August you received the 2003 State and Local Assistance (SLA) application forms. Please return these to DES no later than September 20. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Kris Hamlet at 538-3400.